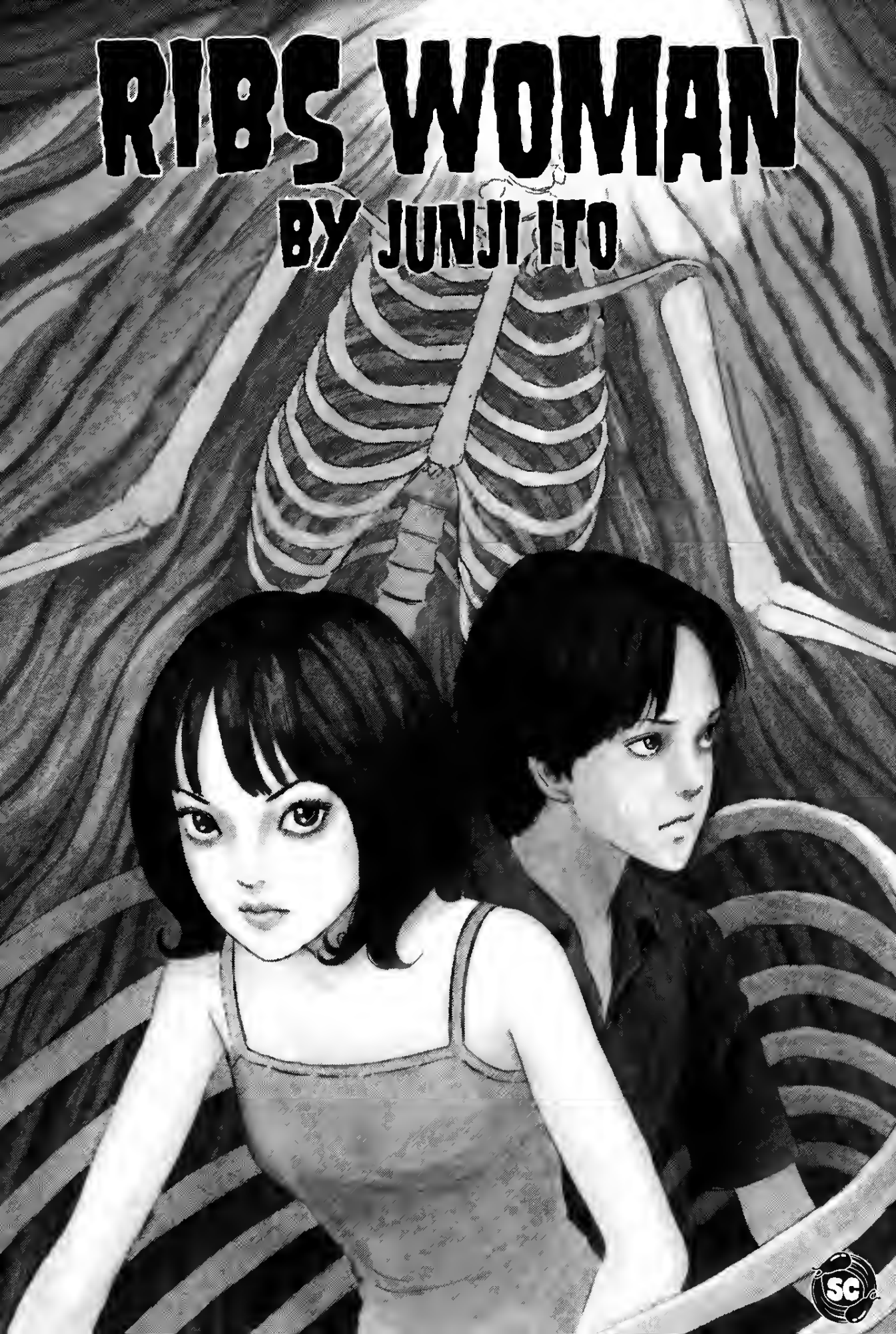
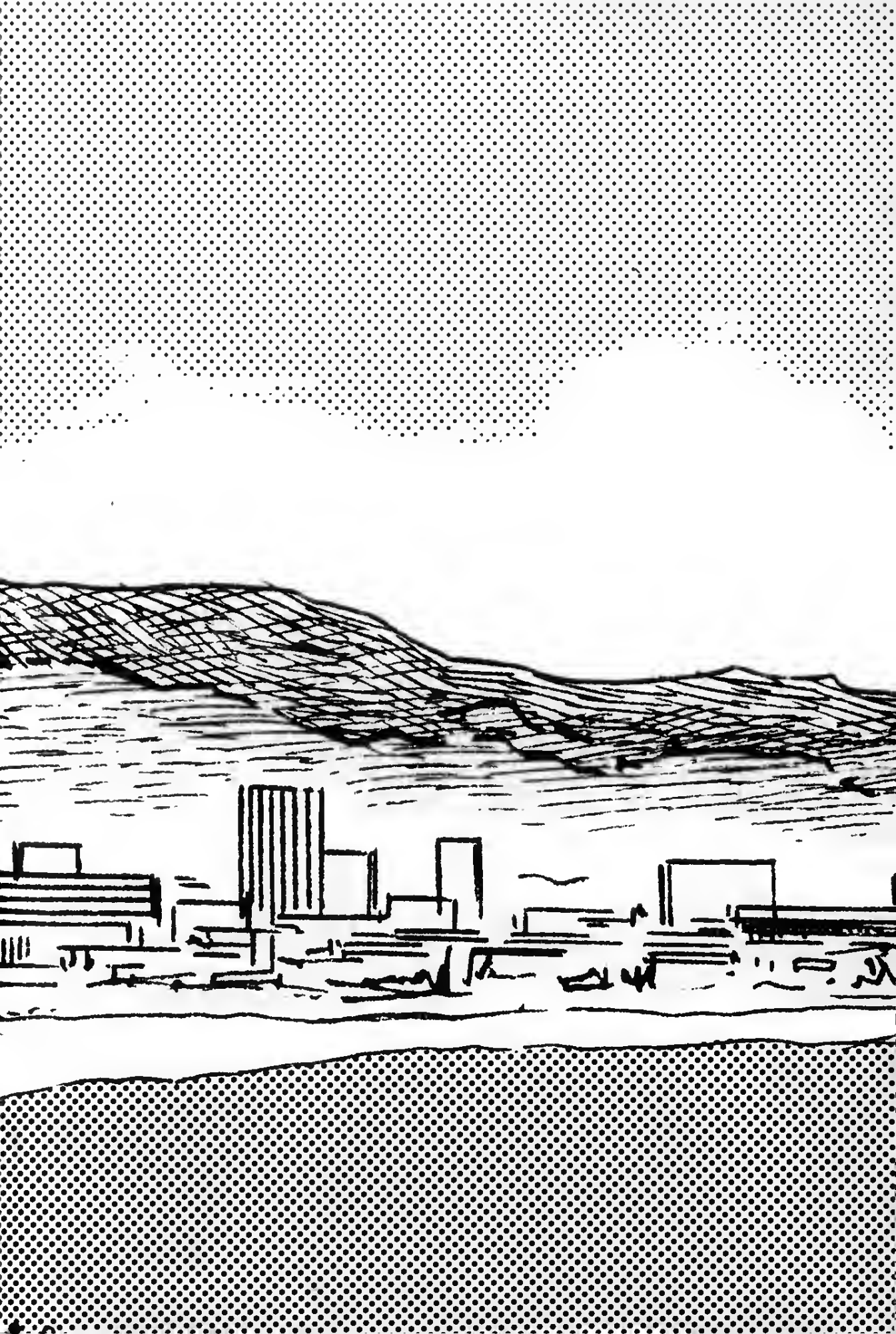
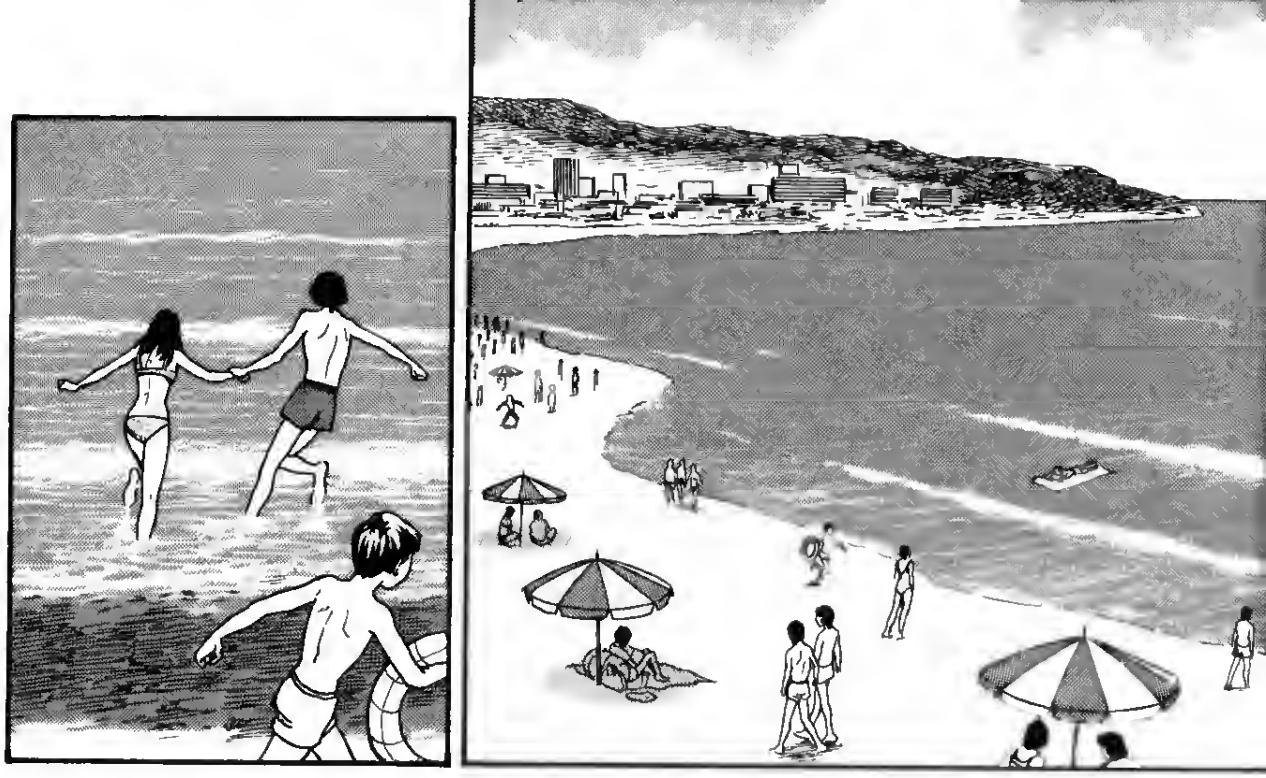
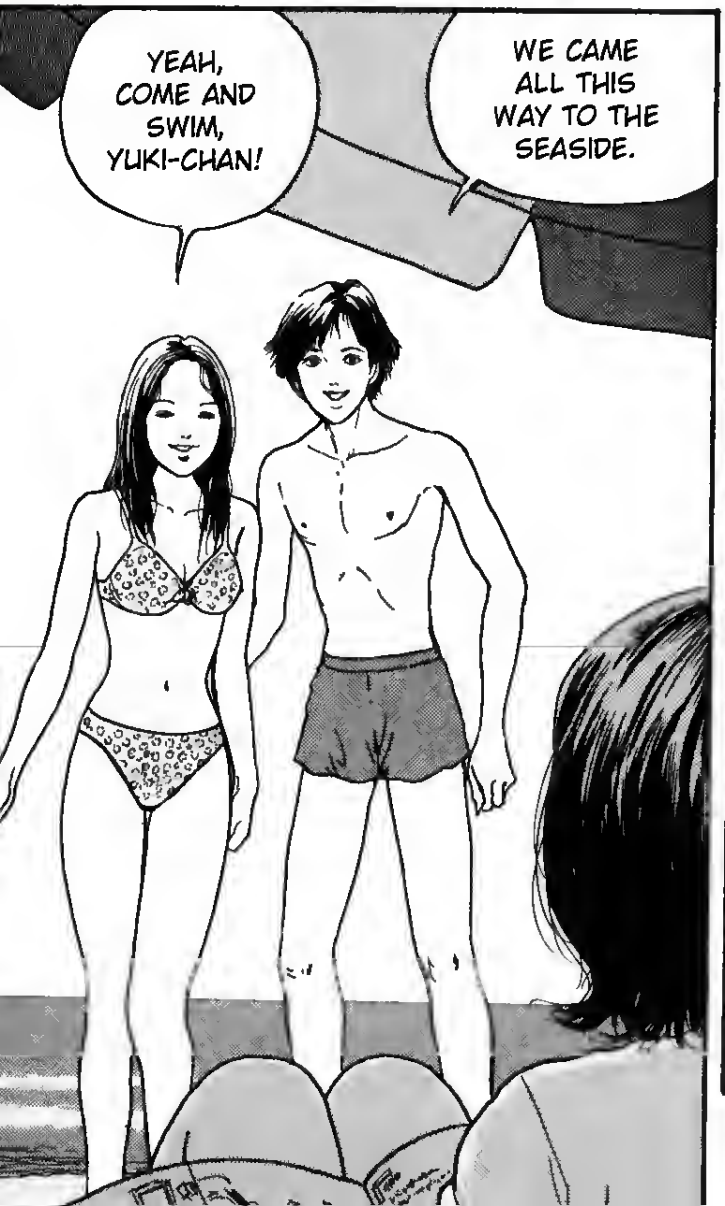
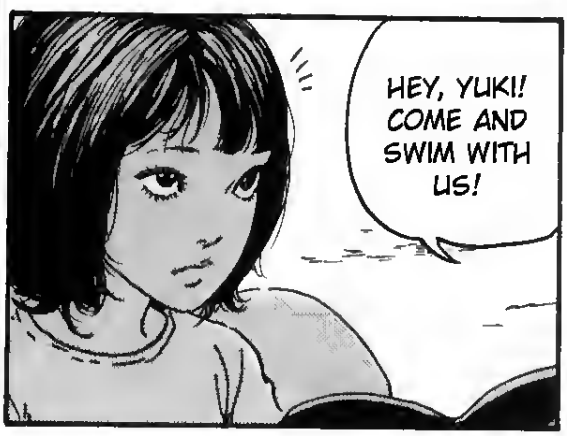

RIBS WOMAN
BY JUNJI ITO

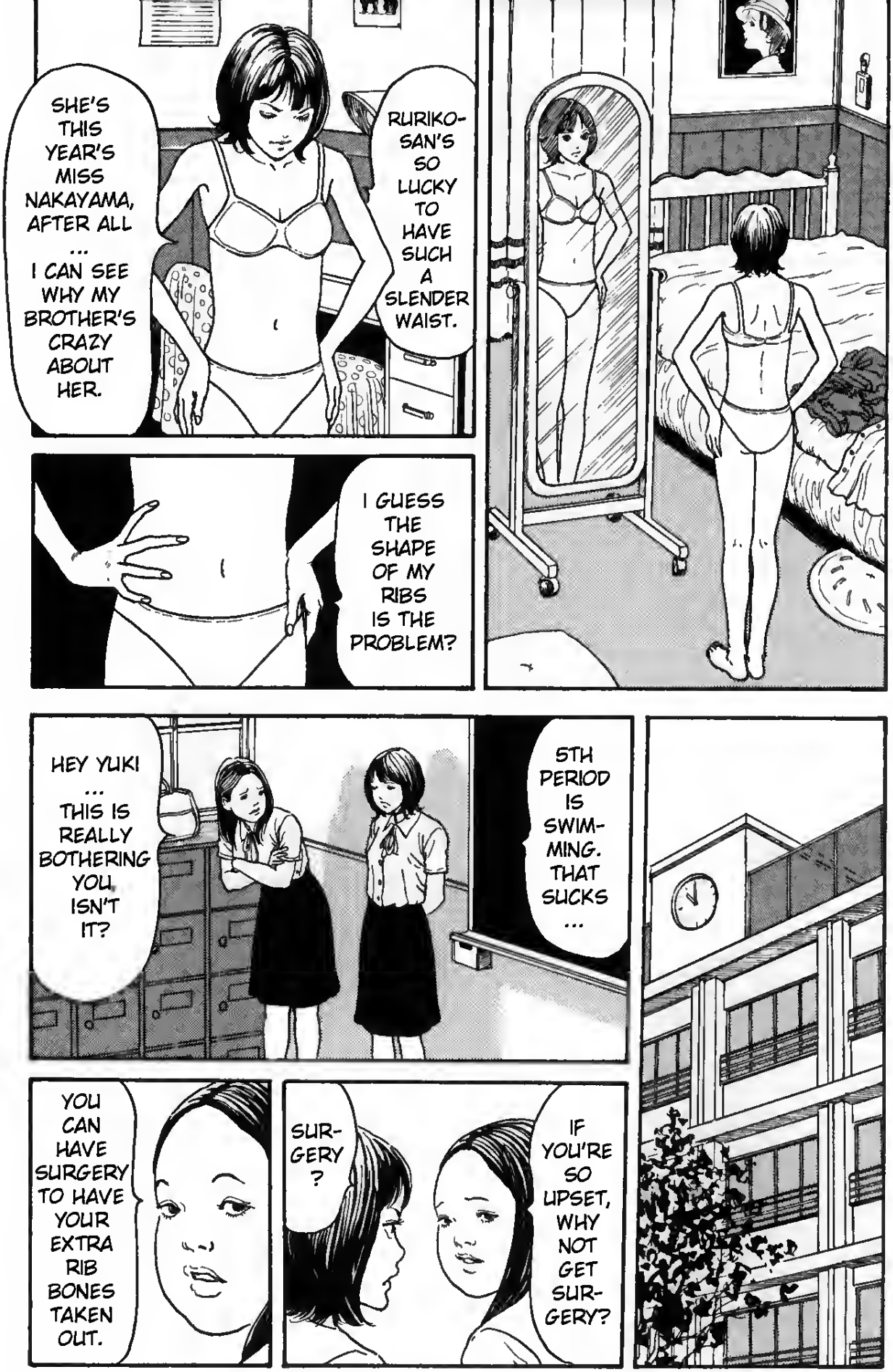


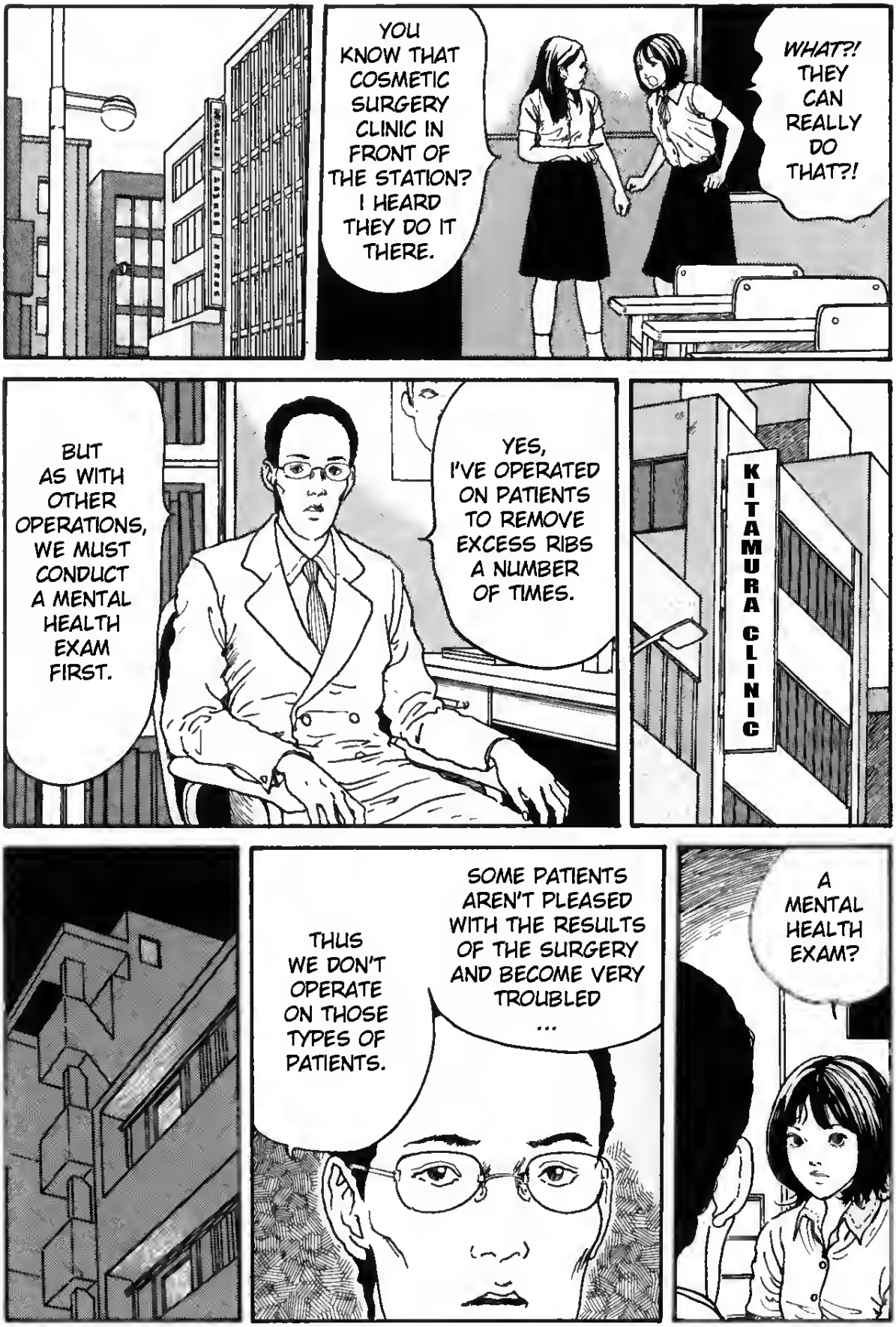



YEAH, COME AND SWIM, YUKI-CHAN!
WE CAME ALL THIS WAY TO THE SEASIDE.

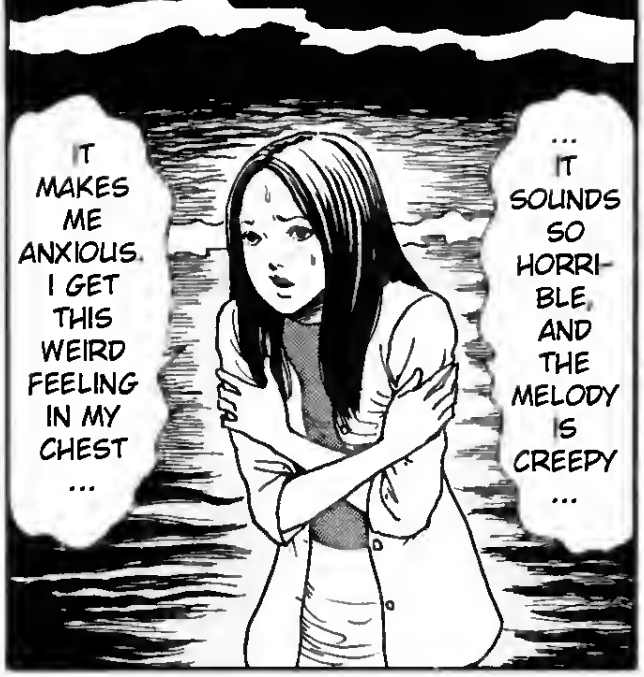

HEY, YUKI! COME AND SWIM WITH US!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT NOT HAVING CURVES.
YOU JUST DON'T WANNA WEAR A SWIM-SUIT, DO YOU?
DONT WORRY ABOUT ME. YOU GUYS GO SWIM.
NO, I DON'T WANT TO.
SHUT UP! LEAVE ME ALONE!
LET'S GO, RURIKO.
WELL IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND, COME JOIN US.
Y... YEAH, KEISUKE-SAN ...
TEE-HEE!
AH HA HA!


RURIKO-SAN'S SO LUCKY TO HAVE SUCH A SLENDER WAIST.
SHE'S THIS YEAR'S MISS NAKAYAMA, AFTER ALL ... I CAN SEE WHY MY BROTHER'S CRAZY ABOUT HER.
I GUESS THE SHAPE OF MY RIBS IS THE PROBLEM?
5TH PERIOD IS SWIM-MING. THAT SUCKS ...
HEY YUKI ... THIS IS REALLY BOTHERING YOU, ISN'T IT?
IF YOU'RE SO UPSET, WHY NOT GET SUR-GERY?
SUR-GERY ?
YOU CAN HAVE SURGERY TO HAVE YOUR EXTRA RIB BONES TAKEN OUT.


YOU KNOW THAT COSMETIC SURGERY CLINIC IN FRONT OF THE STATION? I HEARD THEY DO IT THERE.
WHAT?! THEY CAN REALLY DO THAT?!
BUT AS WITH OTHER OPERATIONS, WE MUST CONDUCT A MENTAL HEALTH EXAM FIRST.
YES, I'VE OPERATED ON PATIENTS TO REMOVE EXCESS RIBS A NUMBER OF TIMES.
KITAMURA CLINIC
THUS WE DON'T OPERATE ON THOSE TYPES OF PATIENTS.
SOME PATIENTS AREN'T PLEASED WITH THE RESULTS OF THE SURGERY AND BECOME VERY TROUBLED ...
A MENTAL HEALTH EXAM?

I GUESS IT IS KINDA SCARY ...
MAYBE I'D BETTER NOT ...
OH!
UMM ... WHAT'S WRONG?
YOU OKAY?
I WISH THAT MUSIC WOULD STOP.
IT'S SO AWFUL !!
RURIKO-SAN, IS THAT YOU?
WHAT'S WRONG ?!
WHAT MUSIC?
.. YUKI-CHAN ... YOU CAN'T HEAR IT EITHER?

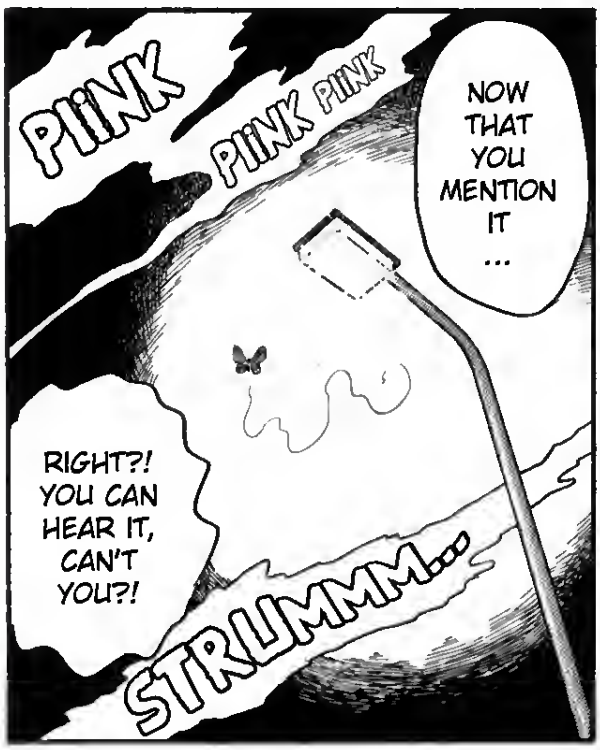

IT MAKES ME ANXIOUS. I GET THIS WEIRD FEELING IN MY CHEST ...
... IT SOUNDS SO HORRIBLE, AND THE MELODY IS CREEPY ...

THAT MUSIC ...
LATELY ... AT NIGHT WHEN IT GETS QUIET, I CAN HEAR IT ...

STRUM STRUM

...

LISTEN CAREFULLY ...
THERE IT IS AGAIN. CAN'T YOU HEAR IT?


PIINK
PIINK PIINK
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT ...
RIGHT?! YOU CAN HEAR IT, CAN'T YOU?!
STRUMMM...

STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...

I CAN HEAR IT CLEARLY. IT SOUNDS LIKE A STRINGED INSTRUMENT.
IT'S TRUE, ONII-CHAN. I CAN KINDA HEAR IT TOO.
WEIRD MUSIC ?
IT'S THE SAME SHORT PIECE BEING PLAYED OVER AND OVER.
NO, IT'S NOT A GUITAR. IT SOUNDS MORE MELAN-CHOLY.
ARE YOU SURE IT WASN'T THE SOUND OF MY BAD GUITAR MUSIC BEING CARRIED ON THE WIND?
WELL LET'S GO TO RURIKO-SAN'S HOUSE AND CHECK IT OUT.
WHAT THE HELL ... WEIRD ...
BUT LAST NIGHT I COULDN'T STAND IT ANYMORE AND WENT LOOKING FOR IT.
I CAN HEAR IT COMING FROM SOMEWHERE EVERY NIGHT. I'VE JUST BEEN ACTING HAPPY AROUND YOU TWO ...

IT'S ALMOST THE TIME WHEN I USUALLY HEAR IT ...
STRUM
STRUMMM...
...
TWANG
STRUMMM...
LET'S GO LOOK AND TRY TO FIND THE SOURCE.
I CAN'T HEAR A THING ...
I GUESS I HEAR SOME-THING ...
STRUMMM...
PLINK
STRUMMM...
PLIN
STRUM
AAH! I CAN HEAR IT !!!

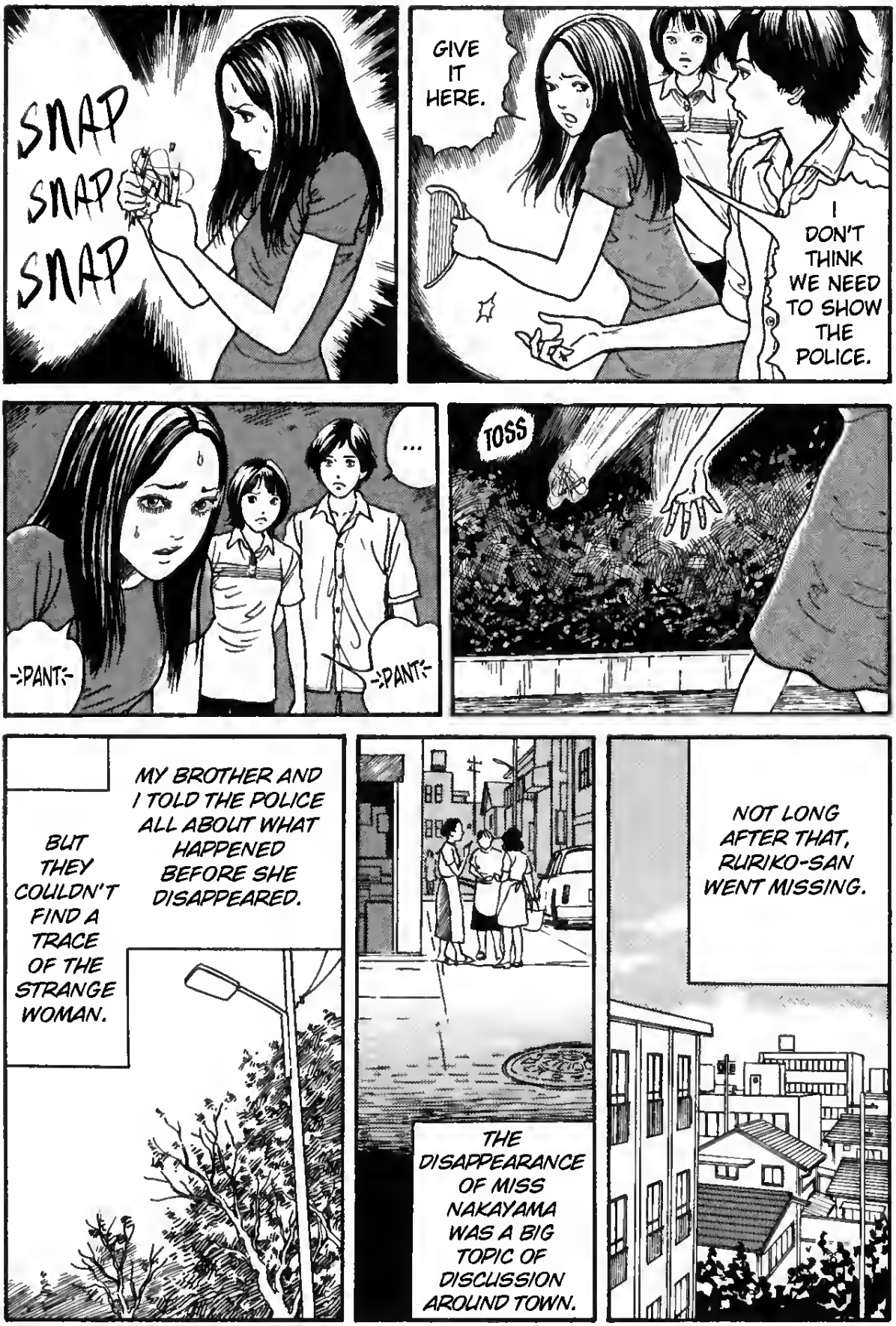
TWANG PIINK
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
HMM ... I'M NOT SURE IF I CAN HEAR IT OR NOT ...
STRUMMM...
IT'S GET-TING CLEAR-ER ...
I CAN DEFINITELY HEAR IT ...
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
I CAN HEAR IT ...
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
TWANGGGG PINK
STRUMMM...
I CAN HEAR IT COMING FROM THE PARK ...
STRUMMM...
IT'S TERR-IBLE !!
THAT AWFUL SOUND ... I FEEL SO ANXIOUS ...
TWANG

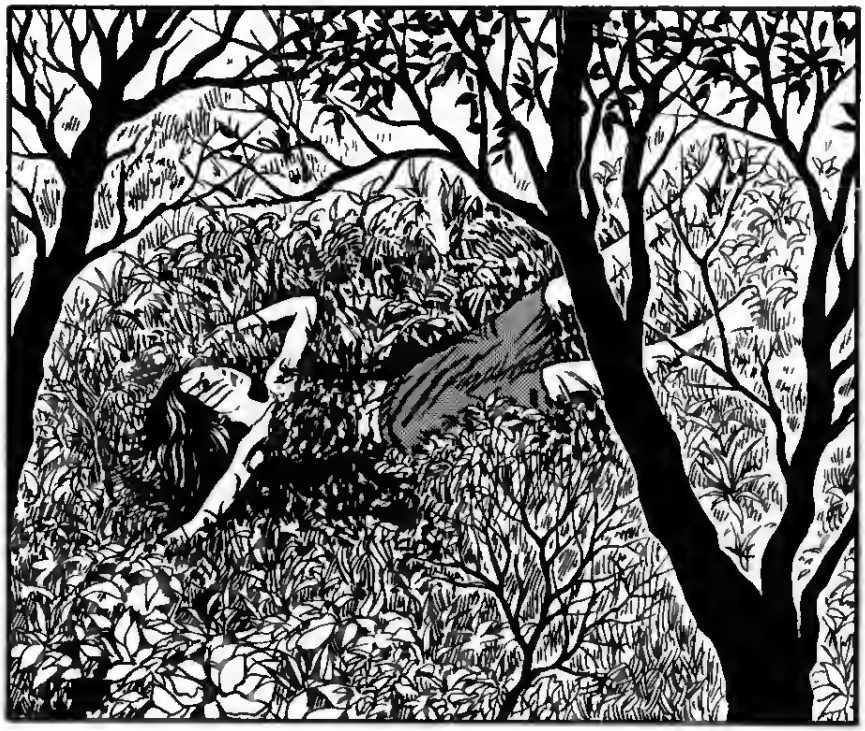
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
TWANG
STRUMMM
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
STOP IT !!
AH HH !!

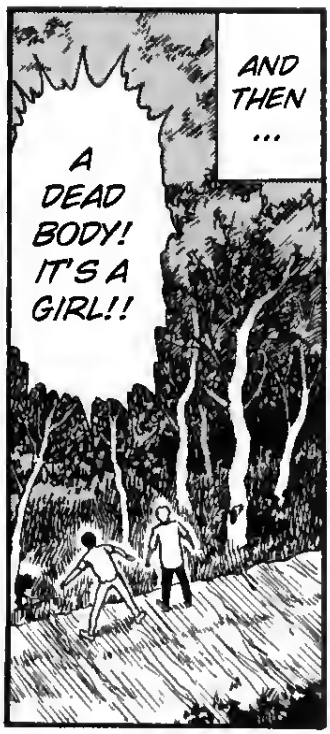
WAIT !!
HEY, WAIT A MINUTE ...
AH!
SHE'S GONE ...
WHAT ?!

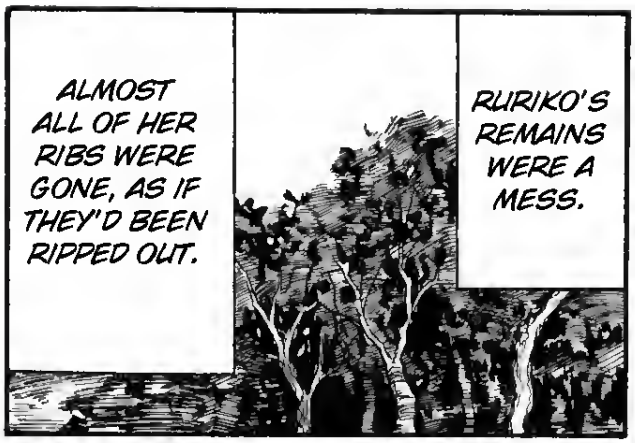
PING
PING
PING
PING
...
THIS IS WHAT SHE WAS PLAY-ING?
THAT'S WEIRD ... IT ISN'T MAKING THAT CREEPY SOUND.
YEAH ...
OF COURSE NOT ... THERE'S NO WAY THIS COULD MAKE SOUND.
HAND-HELD INSTRUMENTS NEED SOMETHING TO RESONATE SOUND.
LIKE THE BODY OF A GUITAR. IT'S CALLED A "SOUND BOX".
... BUT THAT WOMAN MADE IT MAKE SOUND ...
YEAH, THAT'S THE WEIRD THING.
THIS LACKS ONE.
AND THE MATERIAL THIS IS MADE FROM ...

I THINK IT MIGHT BE A RIB.
YEAH, IT IS.
HUH?!
IT COULD BE BONE.
DO YOU THINK ...
... A RIB BONE ?!
WHERE ON EARTH IS IT FROM ...?
... A RIB BONE ...
NO, WAIT ... JUST A SECOND.
...
IT'S LIKELY THE RIB BONE OF SOME ANIMAL.
MAYBE WE SHOULD GIVE IT TO THE POLICE. JUST IN CASE.

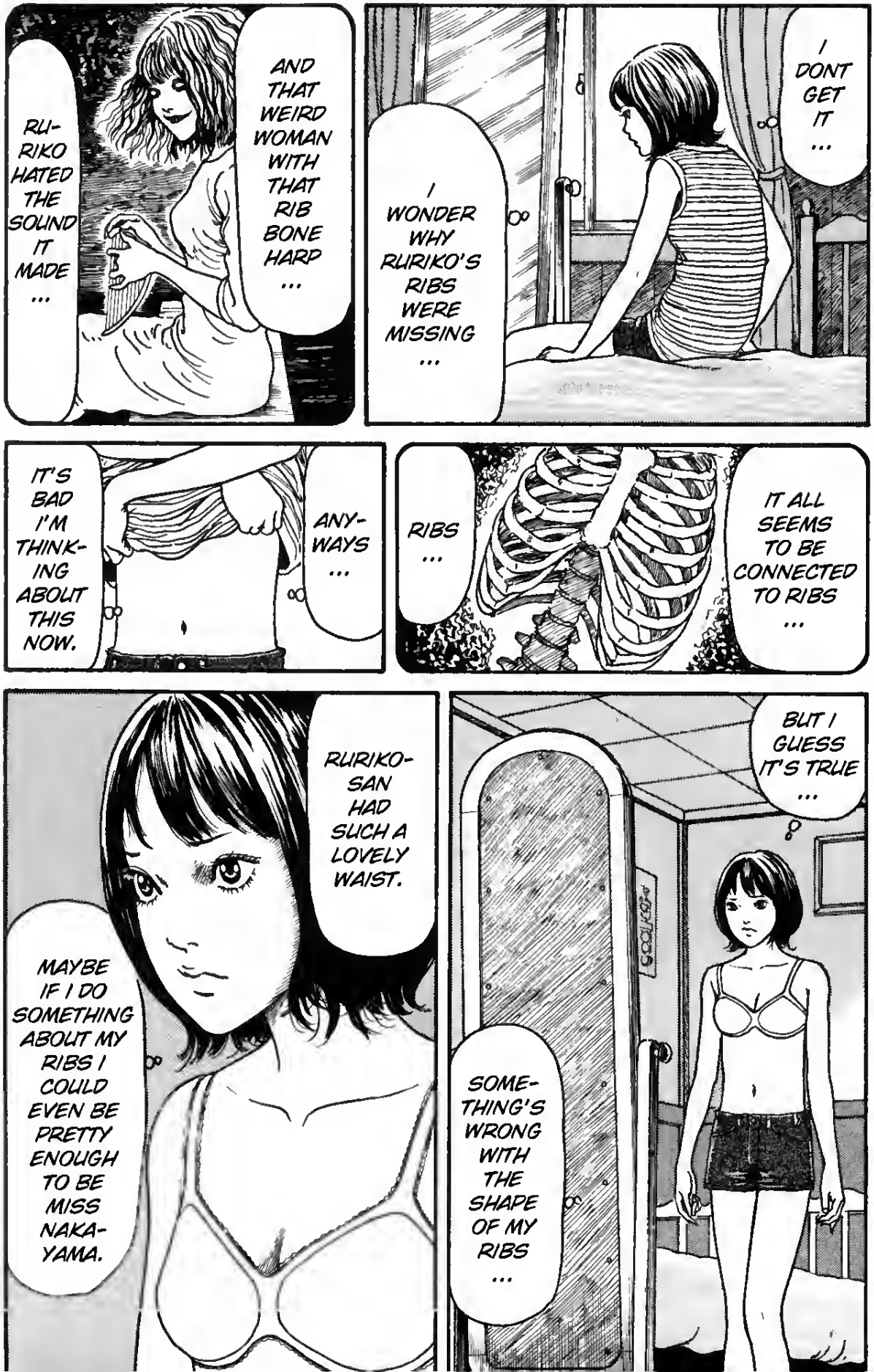

SNAP
SNAP
SNAP
GIVE IT HERE.
I DON'T THINK WE NEED TO SHOW THE POLICE.
...
-:PANT:-
-:PANT:-
TOSS
MY BROTHER AND I TOLD THE POLICE ALL ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE SHE DISAPPEARED.
BUT THEY COULDN'T FIND A TRACE OF THE STRANGE WOMAN.
THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MISS NAKAYAMA WAS A BIG TOPIC OF DISCUSSION AROUND TOWN.
NOT LONG AFTER THAT, RURIKO-SAN WENT MISSING.




AND THEN ...
A DEAD BODY! IT'S A GIRL!!


ALMOST ALL OF HER RIBS WERE GONE, AS IF THEY'D BEEN RIPPED OUT.
RURIKO'S REMAINS WERE A MESS.

ONII-CHAN ...


I DONT GET IT ...
I WONDER WHY RURIKO'S RIBS WERE MISSING ...
AND THAT WEIRD WOMAN WITH THAT RIB BONE HARP ...
RU-RIKO HATED THE SOUND IT MADE ...
IT ALL SEEMS TO BE CONNECTED TO RIBS ...
RIBS ...
ANY-WAYS ...
IT'S BAD I'M THINK-ING ABOUT THIS NOW.
BUT I GUESS IT'S TRUE ...
SOME-THING'S WRONG WITH THE SHAPE OF MY RIBS ...
RURIKO-SAN HAD SUCH A LOVELY WAIST.
MAYBE IF I DO SOMETHING ABOUT MY RIBS I COULD EVEN BE PRETTY ENOUGH TO BE MISS NAKA-YAMA.

I HAVEN'T TOLD THEM. IS THAT BAD?
NO.
DOES YOUR FAMILY KNOW ABOUT THIS?
KITAMURA CLINIC
PLEASE FOLLOW ME TO THE OPER-ATING ROOM.
YOU DON'T SEEM TO HAVE ANY PSYCHO-LOGICAL ISSUES.
NO, THAT'S FINE.
... HMM, I SEE ...

I OPER-ATED ON TWO PEOPLE BEFORE YOU.
THIS IS THE THIRD TIME I'VE CARRIED OUT THIS SURGERY.
IT WILL BE A LITTLE WHILE UNTIL THE ANAESTHETIC TAKES EFFECT.
...
WAS RURIKO SHIMADA, THE GIRL WHOSE MANGLED BODY WAS FOUND THE OTHER DAY.
ACTUALLY, THE SECOND PERSON ... THE PATIENT BEFORE YOU ...
IT'S MY FAULT, TOO FOR FAILING TO NOTICE.
SHE SUFFERED FROM PSYCHO-LOGICAL PROBLEMS.
BUT SHE WASN'T HAPPY WITH THE RESULTS AT ALL.
BUT THE GIRL I OPER-ATED ON FIRST ... THAT WENT VERY BADLY.
HER OPERATION WENT VERY WELL. SHE EVEN BECAME MISS NAKAYAMA.

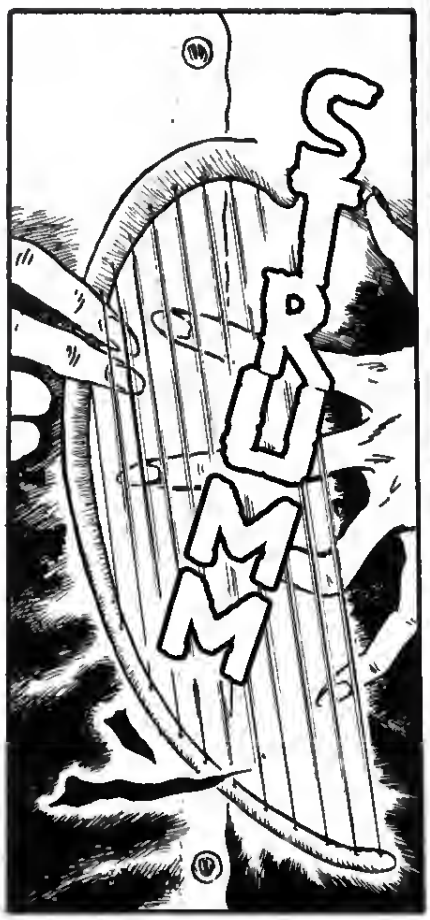
I WANT YOU TO TAKE OUT MORE OF MY RIB BONES.
IF YOU TAKE ONE MORE FROM EACH SIDE I'M SURE IT'LL LOOK BETTER.
AFTER A TIME SHE INSISTED THAT I OPERATE AGAIN.
UNFORTUNATELY I WAS AN INEXPERIENCED DOCTOR BACK THEN, AND GAVE IN TO HER DEMANDS.
OVER AND OVER AGAIN.
BUT THIS PATIENT HAD MORE OF A PSYCHO-LOGICAL PROBLEM THAN A PHYSIO-LOGICAL ONE.
AND UNLESS THOSE ISSUES ARE DEALT WITH, THE PROBLEM WILL CONTINUE.
BUT THERE WAS NOTHING THAT I COULD DO ...
MY GOD ... EVEN JUST HEARING MYSELF SAY IT ...
THAT'S RIGHT ... I ENDED UP REMOVING ALMOST ALL HER RIB BONES !!!
WHAT DO YOU THINK HAPPENED TO HER?

THOSE THINGS DOCTOR KITAMURA SAID BEFORE THE SURGERY ...
WAS THAT A HALLUCI-NATION BROUGHT ON BY THE ANAES-THETIC?
I BET SHE'LL BE MISS NAKAYAMA NEXT YEAR.
HEY, DON'T YOU THINK YUKI LOOKS MORE STYLISH THESE DAYS?
BUT THEN ...
THAT MUST BE IT ...
YEAH ...

STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
THE MELODY AND TONE ARE A BIT DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE THAT SCARED RURIKO-SAN SO MUCH, BUT ...
IT'S STILL SO AWFUL ...
I HEAR IT EVERY NIGHT SINCE THE OPER-ATION ...
OH! I CAN HEAR IT AGAIN TONIGHT !
STRUMMM...
TWANG
TWANG
I CAN FEEL IT IN THE SCARS FROM MY SURGERY ...
AND ... I'VE GOT THIS BAD FEELING IN MY CHEST.
ONII-CHAN ...
TWANG
ONII-CHAN!
ONII-CHAN ...
ギッ
TWANG
IT'S TOO MUCH ... I CAN'T STAND IT ...
TWANG

STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
HEY, ONII-CHAN!
HEY, I CAN HEAR THAT MUSIC...
...
YOU'RE GETTING ON MY NERVES.
LEAVE ME ALONE.
BUT BEFORE I KNEW IT...
I DON'T KNOW HOW I GOT THERE.
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
STRUMMM...
I FOUND MYSELF IN THE FOREST.

STRUMMM...
ザザ
STRUMMM... STRUMM
THE SOUND IS GETTING CLOSER ...
IT'S THAT WOMAN ... SHE'S HERE SOMEWHERE ...
STRUMMM... STRU
STRUMMM...
STRUMM
STRUM
STRUM


STRUMM

STRUMM
STRUMM

TEE
HEE
HEE

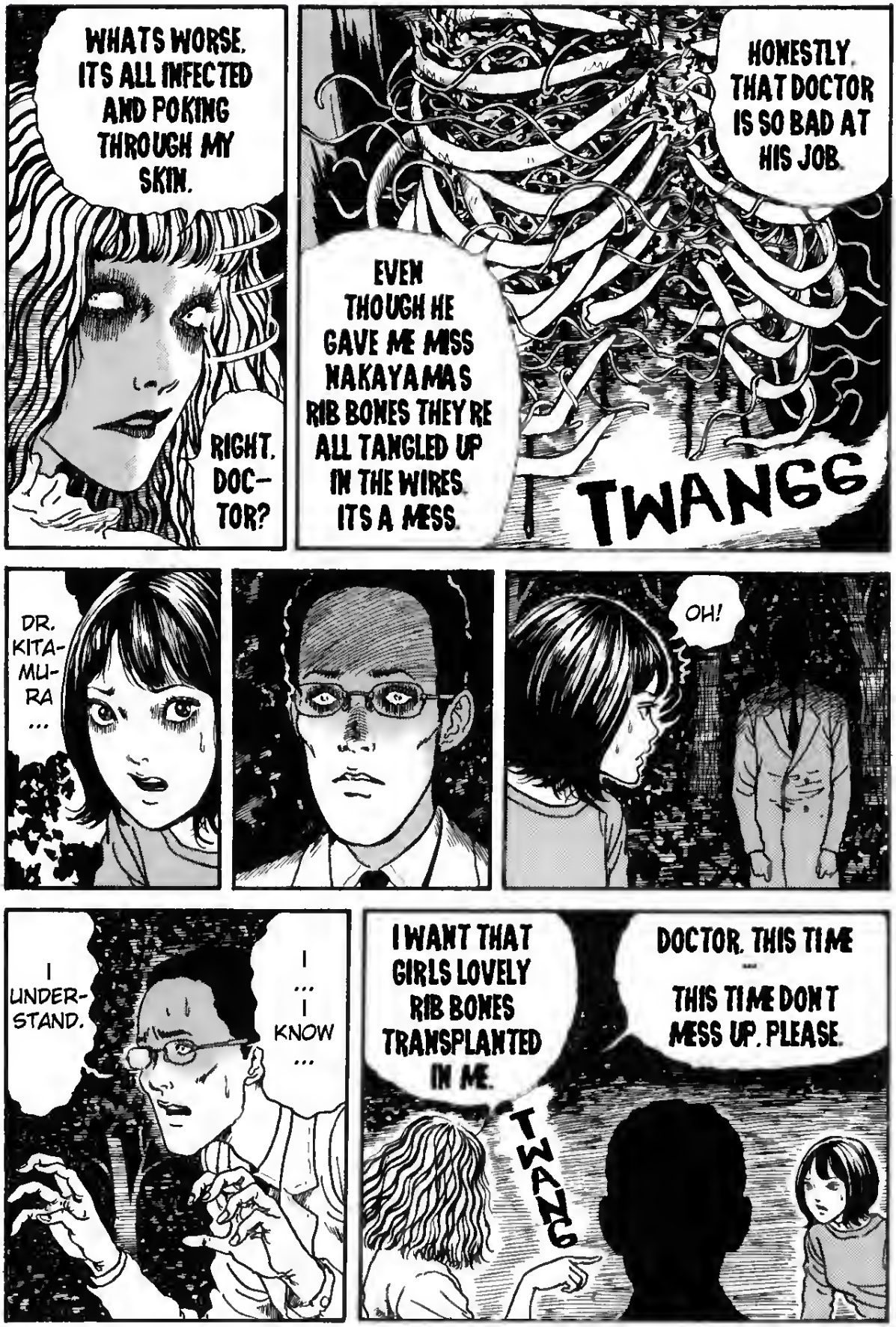
TWANG

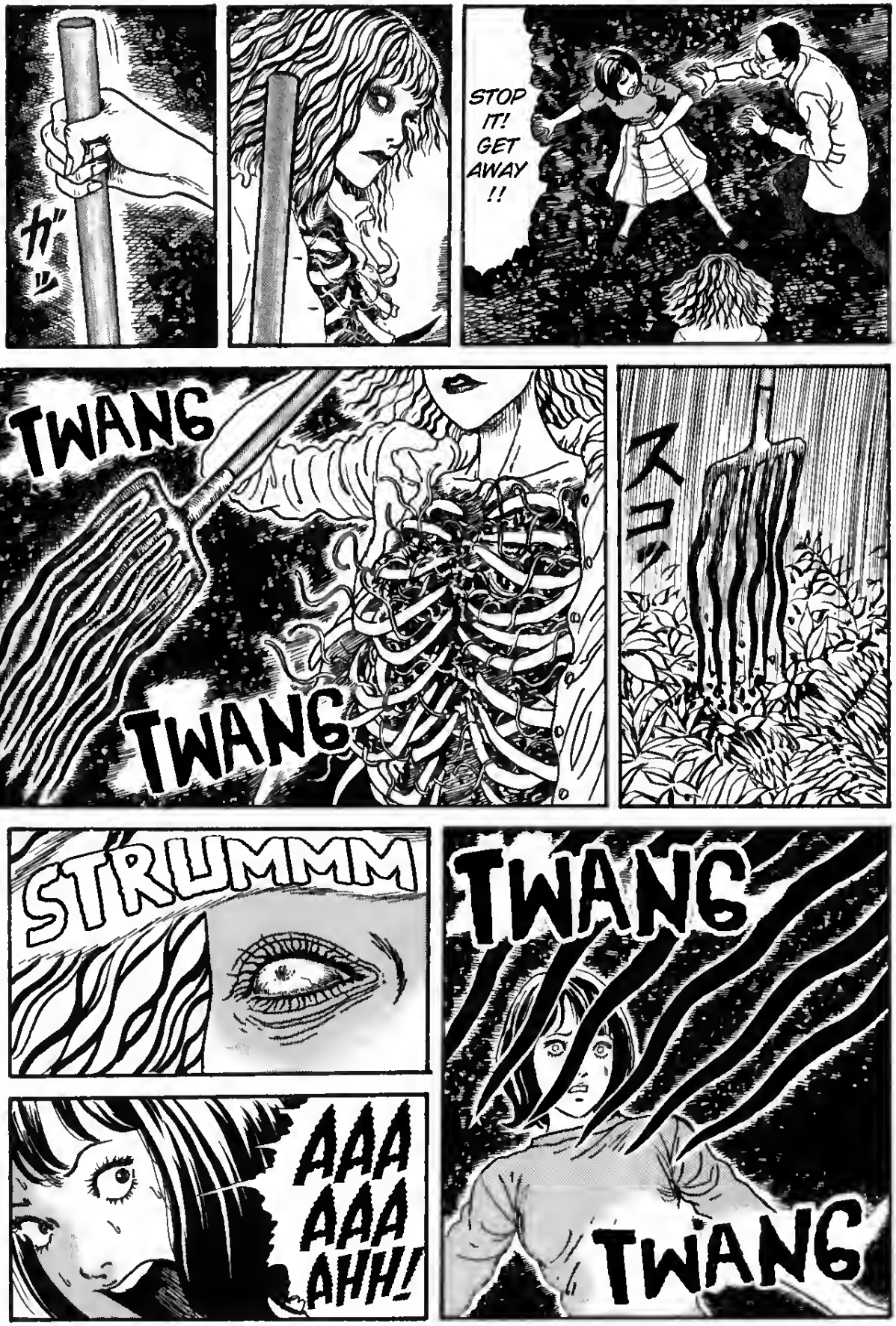
AR
GH
HH
!!

WH-
WHAT ON
EARTH ARE
YOU?!

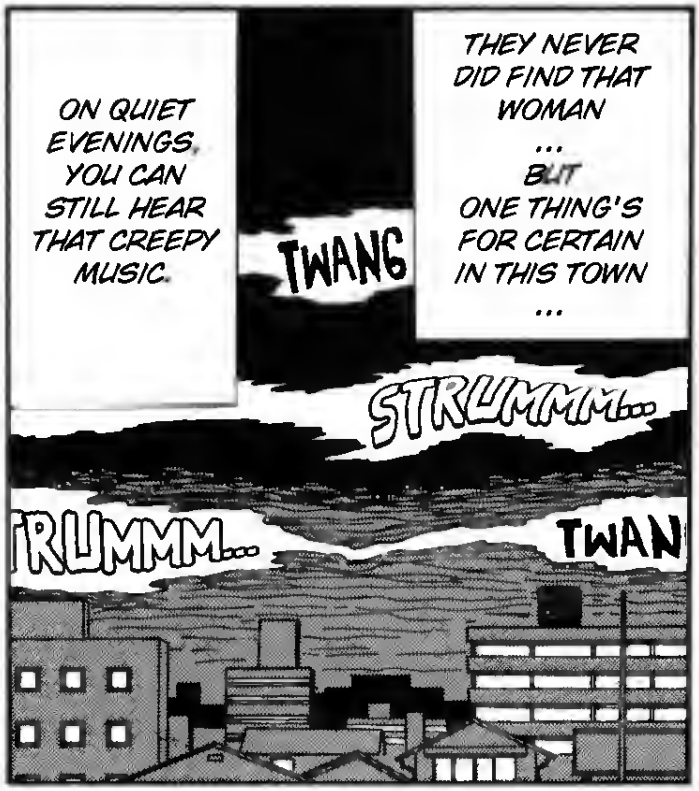
STRUMMM... STRUMMM...
I MEAN. IT IS MADE FROM YOUR RIB AFTER ALL. THE BONE YOU HAD REMOVED DURING YOUR OPERATION.
MY HARP IS RESONATING IN YOUR CHEST.
... YOU CAN HAVE IT BACK.
ボロン
I CAN STILL HEAR IT!
THAT SOUND ...
TWANG TWANG TWANG
THATS RIGHT ...
ILL SHOW YOU.
AND NOW WHENEVER I BREATHE OR MOVE THE WIRES BRUSH AGAINST EACH OTHER AND MAKE THAT MELODY.
TWANG
THATS BECAUSE ITS MY CHEST MAKING THAT SOUND.
SINCE THE DOCTOR TOOK OUT SO MANY OF MY RIBS. HE FILLED MY CHEST WITH TONS OF WIRES INSTEAD.

TWANG
STRUM


WHATS WORSE. ITS ALL INFECTED AND POKING THROUGH MY SKIN.
RIGHT, DOC-TOR?
HONESTLY. THAT DOCTOR IS SO BAD AT HIS JOB.
EVEN THOUGH HE GAVE ME MISS NAKAYAMAS RIB BONES THEY'RE ALL TANGLED UP IN THE WIRES. ITS A MESS.
TWANGG
DR. KITA-MU-RA ...
OH!
I UNDER-STAND.
I ... I KNOW ...
I WANT THAT GIRLS LOVELY RIB BONES TRANSPLANTED IN ME.
DOCTOR. THIS TIME ... THIS TIME DON'T MESS UP. PLEASE.
TWANG


ガッ
STOP IT! GET AWAY !!
TWANG
TWANG
スコッ
STRUMMM
AAA AAA AHH!
TWANG
TWANG

TWANG
TWANG
TWANG
AAAH!!
WAH !!
TEE HEE HEE !!
TWANG
TWANG


ON QUIET EVENINGS, YOU CAN STILL HEAR THAT CREEPY MUSIC.
TWANG
THEY NEVER DID FIND THAT WOMAN ... BUT ONE THING'S FOR CERTAIN IN THIS TOWN ...
STRUMMM...
TRUMMM...
TWAN

**RIBS WOMAN - END**

# RIBS WOMAN

STORY AND ART BY
JUNJI ITO

ENGLISH LANGUAGE VERSION PRESENTED BY
SLUG CHICKS

TRANSLATION - SALIMALI
CLEANINER - SEANIEBOY
TYPESETTER - KAIJU KOI

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